

PRESIDENT'S NOTE TO BERLIN

German Government to De-
cide Whether Break
Shall Come

GRAVE CRISIS NEAR

Seriousness of Situation Which Uni-
ted States Now Faces Is Fully Ap-
preciated.

Washington, April 20—Count von Bernstorff, the German ambassador, today asked Secretary of State Lansing whether the President's ultimatum to Germany demands immediate cessation of all submarine warfare against vessels of commerce, of merely abandonment of "present methods" of warfare.

The German government is said to be prepared to discuss abandonment of method, but it has served notice that it never will abandon all submarine warfare.

The ambassador obtained the Secretary's views on such limitations as would bring German warfare in conformity to this country's ideas of international law and humanity.

Washington, April 20—Instant approval of America's position on submarine warfare as indicated in President Wilson's note to Berlin was expressed in both Paris and London today.

Speculation on Germany's possible course is guarded in both capitals, but belief prevails that Berlin cannot yield her strongest weapon and that a breach will follow.

Such a breach, London believes, would not mean hostilities, but would furnish the German government an opportunity to so regulate submarine warfare as to give no further offense to the United States, without appearing to yield.

German newspapers are guarded in their comments on the situation, awaiting the official publication of the President's demands, but showing very strong anti-American feeling.

The American note reached Ambassador Gerard in Berlin at 11 o'clock this morning for transmission to Foreign Secretary von Jagow.

Washington, April 20.—President Wilson has issued his ultimatum to the German Government demanding that submarine warfare against merchantmen shall cease if Germany wishes to maintain friendly relations with the United States.

No more solemn proceeding has ever been witnessed in the historic hall of the House of Representatives than the President's announcement yesterday afternoon that he had taken this step. No more dramatic circumstance has ever been participated in by either body of national lawmakers.

There was no sudden outburst of shouting and tumult when the President appeared or when the last words of his communication fell from his lips. A sense of profound gravity seemed to fill the chamber and a realization that this country was on the threshold of a history-making move. There was applause, but it issued from no exhilaration, no feeling of buoyancy.

As the President announced the position he has taken and the course he has pursued within the last 24 hours, Congress realized that this Government has cast the die, that the President has laid down a proposition to the German Government which, if rejected, will almost certainly plunge the United States into the world war. It is no wonder, therefore, that all enthusiasm vanished, and that even patriotic fervor manifested itself in only subdued forms.

It is useless to minimize the grave possibilities that are ahead of the American people. The President, in his note to Germany, briefly outlined in his message to Congress, declares unqualifiedly that submarine warfare cannot be carried on with

the law when directed at merchant ships.

This note does not impeach the good faith of Germany in trying to regulate undersea fighting, or assail the sincerity of the pledges Germany has given this country. On the contrary it says that a submarine warfare cannot be carried on without violating such pledges; therefore, if the laws of nations and of humanity are respected the campaign will have to end.

And, in demanding that Germany use her submarines against warships only the United States calls upon that country to abandon a campaign which the German Government professes to believe is her only effective weapon in combating the British starvation blockade.

Whether or not Germany will make so sweeping a surrender of course remains to be seen. If she does not diplomatic intercourse between the two countries will suddenly stop, and when that intercourse is broken off friendly relations will necessarily cease.

The hope is expressed on every hand here that the German Government, when it comes to weight the demands which have been made, and to balance the loss of American friendship and possibly that of other neutrals against the doubtful gains from submarine attacks upon non-combatant merchantmen, will yield. At best, however, this is but hope. No assurance has come from any source to sustain it.

In any event the next move must come from Germany. The responsibility for the future relationship between this country and that rests upon Berlin. The President has taken his stand and it is irrevocable. If it had not been the situation would not have been laid before Congress. The answer of the German Government, therefore, will be anxiously awaited from end to end of the country.

It is significant that the President made no recommendation whatever to Congress. He asked that body to take no action, not even to support the position he had taken. Moreover, he stated plainly that he had sent his ultimatum to Germany, not that he would send it. In other words, he went to Congress to communicate action already taken, not to ask advice upon action that was contemplated.

Such a note at has been forwarded to Germany, of course, is not tantamount to war. Even if the demands are rejected and diplomatic relations are broken, it does not necessarily follow that war will be declared by either government. Both sides may simply stand off and await developments.

Moreover, Germany may decide to suffer a break between that country and this, rather than abandon its undersea campaign, but may at the same time issue such orders to her submarine commanders as will give the United States no cause for further complaint. In other words, the Berlin Government, for domestic reasons, may prefer a loss of American friendship to the condemnation of her own public opinion. This is a view held by many of those who fear that Germany will publicly proclaim no abandonment of the undersea warfare.

At best, however, the situation is grave. Yet there seems nothing more to be done from Washington until the final reply of Germany is received. If the American demand now merely asked for further assurances as to attacks upon unarmed and unresisting merchant ships, the outlook would be more promising. But the demand is for the abandonment of attacks against all merchantmen, and therefore raises a far broader question than has heretofore arisen between the two governments.

Governor Stuart refused yesterday to interfere with the sentence of death, which will be carried out against Joe Lee, colored the Caroline murderer. Attorney C. M. Chichester, of Fredericksburg, appeared before the Governor at 5 o'clock yesterday afternoon with a plea for commutation of the sentence to life imprisonment. The negro is sentenced to die in the electric chair tomorrow morning.

Martha Washington Candies. Fresh every day, at P. O. Cockey's 525 King.

Little neck clams and clams in all styles at the Rammel Cafe.

GERMANS SHIFT ATTACK AT VERDUN

French Assert Three As-
saults Were Repulsed
at Les Eparges

BERLIN MAKES CLAIMS

Teutons Enter Enemy Trenches, But
Are Immediately Expelled With
Heavy Losses

Paris, April 20—Russian troops landed at the French port of Marseilles today to join the allied troops in operations against the Germans on the continent.

his sensational announcement made simultaneously with the day issued by General Joffre, sending wishes to the first detachment of soldiers of the Czar to fight on a trench since the beginning of the war.

The Germans near Haudremont, northeast of Verdun, in a bayonet attack in which heavy casualties were inflicted on the French, have captured a stone quarry, around which they gained a footing on Monday.

There has been considerable artillery activity west of the Meuse on hill No. 304, and the French first lines between Dead Man's Hill and Cumieres. At Les Eparges, after three attacks, they entered the French trenches on a front of about 200 yards but were immediately expelled from them, suffering serious losses.

Artillery duels are still in progress on the Russian front, but there has been no important change in positions. A Russian attack against Austrian positions on the upper Sereth River in Galicia was repulsed.

The Italians have captured Monte Fume Pass from the Austrians, and taken the extreme western peak of Monte Ancora, where the Austrian trenches were shattered, with heavy casualties to their occupants.

Still another defeat of the Turks in the region of Erzerum is recorded by the Russians. Near Aschkala, the Russians in a night attack captured strongly organized hills, and inflicted severe casualties on the Turks, who left hundreds of dead on the field of battle.

Premier Asquith has postponed until next Tuesday a statement of the British government's position with regard to conscription. The Premier has told the House of Commons that unless the disagreement among the members of the Cabinet can be amicably settled, there will be a break-up of the coalition ministry.

The reply of Great Britain and France to the American government's protest against their interference with maritime commerce has been cabled to Washington.

Greece has formally protested against the use by the entente powers of Suvla Bay, Island of Crete, for a naval base.

Paris, April 20—With artillery providing all the activity on the Verdun fronts, the Germans in the Woivre district directed three attacks against positions at Les Eparges, all of which were repulsed, though in the last one a temporary footing was gained in a first-line trench. A French counter attack ejected the enemy with serious losses, according to the official communication issued by the French War Office last night.

BOY KILLED UNDER WHEELS.

Runs Into Path of Motor Truck While
Playing Tag

Philadelphia, April 18—Running across Fifty-fifth street near Webster, during a game of tag yesterday, Willie Eddie, 8 years old, ran directly in the path of a large motor truck and was knocked down and so badly injured that he died.

SHELLS FALLING ON RHEIMS

Paris, April 19.—The bombardment of Rheims continues intermittently. On Saturday 28 shells fell in the city during the morning and 40 in the afternoon.

On Sunday, five shells fell within an hour, and hostile aircraft loitered over the city throughout the day.

LOCAL BREVITIES

The Junior German Club will not meet tomorrow on account of Good Friday but will meet on Friday, April 28th.

The Lord's Supper will be administered tonight at the Methodist Protestant Church. The subject for the sermon will be "Gethsemane."

In the Corporation Court today a final decree was entered in the case of John T. Harrison's Administrator vs. E. J. Harrison et al.

In the Corporation Court today a final decree was entered in the case of Ethel Acton vs. Jos. E. Acton, by which the plaintiff was granted a divorce from the defendant on the ground of desertion.

The public schools closed this afternoon at 2:30 o'clock for the Easter holidays and will remain closed until Tuesday morning at 9 o'clock. St. Mary's Academy has also closed for the same period.

Fresh Potomac fish, large rock, roe shad, large buck shad, white perch, black bass, large herring, all strictly fresh. Sanitary Fish Market, Phone 735 City Market.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS

Teachers and Scholars of Sunday
School of M. E. Church
South Meet

The regular monthly business meeting of the officers and teachers of the Washington Street M. E. Church South, Sunday School, was held Tuesday night, at which time the work of the last year was reviewed and officers elected for the new conference year.

A review showed the school to be in a flourishing condition, there was present during the year 16900 scholars, attaining an average of 79 per cent., and raised for Sunday School purposes \$994.50.

The following officers were appointed to serve the ensuing conference year:

Superintendent, J. Frank Myers.
Assistant Superintendent, Nevell S. Greenaway.

Secretary, Harry H. Newton.
Assistant Secretaries, Elmer Smith, Esmond Davis and Barbour Beach, Treasurer, W. C. Baggett.

Librarian, F. J. Pollard,
Assistant Librarians, Jas. G. Graham, Adrian Tomlin and J. B. Cox.
Superintendent of Supplies, Alvin Powell.

President Missionary Society, Mrs. Geo. E. Warfield.

Superintendent Home Department, Mrs. Alvin Powell.

Superintendent Cradle Roll, Miss Emily May.

Chorister, T. J. Davis.
Assistant Chorister, Samuel Luckett.

Pianist, Miss Ruth Gerlach.
Assistant Pianist, Miss Jennie Richards.

Orchestra, Leader, Mr. F. L. Plitt.
Robert Gulland, Elmer Davis, Alvin Friedlander and Preston Merchant.

Superintendent of Beginners' Department, Mrs. Blewett.

Assistants Beginners' Department, Miss Olive Davis and Mrs. C. E. Outcalt.

Superintendent Primary Department, Mrs. Jas. E. Alexander.
Assistant Superintendent Primary Department, Miss Julia Davis.

CHARTER GRANTED.

The State Corporation Commission has granted a charter to the Corby Baking Co., Inc., Alexandria; maximum, \$300,000; minimum, \$300,000. C. I. Corby, president, Washington, D. C.; William Thomas, secretary, Alexandria.

FIRE IN FAIRFAX

The fire which destroyed hundreds of dollars' worth of property in lower Fairfax county, on Tuesday afternoon and night burned itself out yesterday afternoon. S. B. Stonell, was a large loser of wood pulp which was stacked in the woods.

Our delicious deviled crabs at the Rammel Cafe.

ASSESSMENT OF GRAYSON

State Tax Board Protests
Against Further Reduc-
tion in County

ACTS UNDER NEW LAW

Executive Assistant Notifies Local
Board of Review State Will Not
Assent.

Richmond, April 20—Acting for the first time under the new law which greatly enlarges the authority of the State Tax Board, Christopher B. Garnett, executive assistant of this body, notified the Local Board of Review of Grayson County yesterday that if the commissioners of the revenue in that county undertook to comply with the local board's order directing a 50 per cent reduction in real estate assessments, the State Tax Board will be asked to give him authority to institute proceedings in the Circuit Court of Grayson County for a correction of the assessment.

The development is of particular significance, since it is the State Tax Board's first official step in the direction of bringing about an equalization of assessment throughout the State. Grayson County has for years served as a classical example of the so-called "pauper" counties of the State, which draw from the treasury more money than they pay in. The 1915 report of the Auditor of Public Accounts shows that Grayson County, in the fiscal year ending September 30, 1915, paid to the state a total of \$17,510.64, while the State disbursed on its account a total of \$49,200.69. The loss to the State was \$31,690.05.

In ordering a 50 per cent reduction of the real estate assessment, the Grayson County Board of Review justified the act by the assertion that this property has been assessed in Grayson out of proportion to similar property in other counties, and the reduction was necessary to bring the assessment into proportion. The local Board of Review notified Auditor Moore and the latter referred the matter to Mr. Garnett.

Mr. Garnett promptly dispatched the following letter to J. G. Davis, chairman of the Local Board of Review of Grayson County:

"The Auditor of Public Accounts has referred to me a copy of an order entered by the Local Board of Review of Grayson County on April 15, 1916, from which I take the following quotation:

"Upon investigation by this board and it being made to appear that the real estate in Grayson County is assessed out of proportion to similar real estate in other counties of this State, and that the same should be lowered in order to bring it into proportion to similar real estate in the other counties, it is therefore ordered by this board that the three commissioners of revenue for Grayson County, in making out their land books for their respective districts, reduce the assessment on each tract of land, and on each town lot and on each building in their respective districts, 50 per cent, except such tracts, lots and buildings as have been specifically corrected and reported to said commissioners of the revenue on blank forms furnished this board by the Auditor of Public Accounts of Virginia, which specific items shall be assessed as reported on said blanks."

"This is such an unprecedented action on the part of your board that it appears to me such action was taken without due deliberation. In the first place, if it should be taken as a precedent by other local boards of review, there will immediately commence a competitive cutting down of the assessments, which will result in disaster both to the State and the localities affected. In the second place, it is founded upon an unethical basis. Because

another community does not observe the law is no reason for your community to break the same. The same principle applied to personal behavior would make us all lawbreakers in a very short time, and there would be no such thing as law and order.

"I want to call your attention to a quotation from chapter 215, Acts 1916, which amends the law in regard to the State Tax Board. Such quotation, so far as pertinent here, reads as follows:

"The State Tax Board may apply to the Circuit Court of a county for the correction of any erroneous assessment of license taxes, or the erroneous assessment of lands or other property, either as to over or under valuation, in the same manner as is provided by law for the correction of erroneous assessment of property by any person who is aggrieved thereby."

"This law becomes effective June 17, 1916, and if the commissioner of the revenue act in accordance with the order above quoted I shall request the State Tax Board for authority to make the motion in the Circuit Court of Grayson County for the correction of these assessments.

"I therefore urge upon you to rescind the action taken by your board on April 15th, so as to relieve the necessity for an appeal therefrom by the State Tax Board."

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KILLED NIGHT WATCHMAN.

Then Henry Blakeslee, Village Marshal, Tries Suicide.

Medina, Ohio, April 19.—Henry Blakeslee, village marshal, was found hiding in a haymow in the barn of a neighbor yesterday afternoon, following an 8-hour search by officers, after the killing here yesterday morning of Night Watchman John Gates, 60 years old.

Blakeslee, who had attempted suicide, admitted having slain Gates, saying the latter threatened him.

Blakeslee had shot himself in the side and is dangerously wounded. He is now under guard in the hospital.

ISSUE WITH GERMANY.

Von Bernstorff and Lansing Will
Confer Today.

Washington, April 20.—Count von Bernstorff, the German Ambassador, sent to Berlin last night a long dispatch interpreting the situation in Washington and making certain recommendations. He is understood to have advised his government that he believed the United States meant just what it said in its submarine note and that something would have to be done quickly if friendly relations were to continue.

The Ambassador himself, having read the address of the President and the note, said:

"I can make no comment either upon the address or upon the communication which has been sent to my government."

However, he was authoritatively described as having advised the Berlin foreign office in the message sent last night that he believed at least some such declaration as that made regarding the conduct of submarine warfare in the Mediterranean Sea should be issued immediately to cover all submarine operations.

The Mediterranean declaration was handed to Secretary Lansing by the Ambassador on January 7 of this year. It contained assurances much broader in their scope than those given to cover the activities of submarines in the war zone around the British Isles, where German has contended from the first that she was engaged in a campaign of retaliation for the British blockade.

The assurances were to the effect that only a cruiser warfare would be conducted against enemy merchant shipping, and that noncombatant ships of every character, freight, as well as passenger carrying, would be accorded proper warning and safety for their passengers and crews. The assurances which have been given for the war zone around the British Isles covered only "liners."

The declaration of January 7, also promised that German submarine commanders who failed to obey the assurances given would be punished and that reparation would be made for death or injury to American citizens.

It is expected that Count von Bernstorff will confer with Secretary Lansing today.

Steamed Hard Shelled Crabs at the Rammel Cafe.

ARMY WILL STAY ON VILLA'S TRAIL

General Scott Sent to Mexican
Border For Com-
plete Report

MAY VISIT PERSHING

Chief of Staff to Act as "Eyes" For
Secretary Baker, But Not to Sup-
plant Funston.

Washington, D. C. April 20.—No decision as to withdrawal of American troops from Mexico is expected for a week or 10 days unless there are new outbreaks against the forces in Mexico to compel immediate action. This was made clear when Secretary Baker despatched Major General Hugh L. Scott, Chief of Staff to the border as his personal representative to make a complete report on the military problems confronting Gen. Funston.

The Administration's final action on Gen. Carranza's suggestion that the expedition be recalled probably will be based largely on what is shown in this report. Gen. Scott, who left Washington last night, hardly will be able to make the round trip and complete his observations in less than 10 days.

Secretary Baker described Gen. Scott's mission as being to assemble complete information as to the border situation for the use of the department. He also will establish a personal touch with that situation for the Secretary, of which Secretary Baker has felt the need in advising the Administration as to the military aspects of the Mexican question.

General Scott himself explained that he would be "the eyes of the Secretary" on the border. Accompanied by his aide, Lieutenant Colonel Robert E. L. Michie, of the General Staff, he will reach Gen. Funston's headquarters at San Antonio, Tex., Friday evening.

Secretary Baker laid stress in his announcement on the fact that Gen. Funston still is in supreme command of the border situation and expeditionary forces, and will remain so. He said the department fully approved every step Gen. Funston had taken, and that Gen. Scott was going only because it had seemed desirable to get a clearer view than was possible by means of official reports.

In the meantime State Department officials will take up consideration of what reply they shall make to the Carranza note urging the withdrawal of the American forces. Some questions involved in that note can be worked out before the military situation finally is reported. It is understood this work will be started tomorrow, the German situation having occupied the attention of officials, virtually to the exclusion of other matters, for some days.

Gen. Scott's orders permit him to go where he thinks best along the border or into Mexico with the troops to obtain the close and accurate knowledge of the situation wanted by Secretary Baker. His aid, before leaving that he had no present intention of going beyond the border. He will make daily reports from the border.

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